

SAN DIEGO
MESA COLLEGE



Program Review

Summary and Reflections with Unit Goals, Action Plans, and Updates

Leadership - Office of Communications

Executive Summary

Describe the successes and challenges your unit has faced since the last comprehensive review.

Overview:

The Mesa College Office of Communications provides public relations, community engagement, social media, web development and support, graphic design, event promotions, photography, videos and other marketing and communications support to the campus community. We additionally serve in a liaison capacity with the District, the region, elected officials, community and industry groups and the greater San Diego region. Office of Communications office staff are skilled in their areas of expertise, and have won industry awards for writing, social media, web, photography, video, graphic projects, and printed publications. We embrace new challenges and direction with positive spirit. We improve our skills through training, webinars and independent research. We work diligently to provide services, solve issues and create better processes for the College and better access for students. The office engages in open and constant communication which is maintained with and by all members ? including those that work part?time.

The team works well together and has been instrumental in taking on new tasks, learning new skills, and embracing new communication tools and platforms. Via the newly implemented Project Request system, staff are able to track projects, meet deadlines, offer creative solutions, and uphold the college branding guidelines. The Office of Communications is customer oriented, and maintains contact with internal and external clients. We enjoy working with our campus clients and vendors to create materials and assist with events and programs that promote and create conditions for students to succeed. Based on a variety of feedback, the staff are well-regarded by district colleagues and campus clients, as well as vendors, the Foundation, members of the community, the media and other college partners.

Successes:

Successes in the past year include: Deployment of new academic program and academic and career pathways webpages, providing photography and video support at over 100 events, including major events such as the Equity & Excellence fundraising event, and annual events such as the Scholarship Awards Ceremony and Commencement. Annually, we have successfully produced the Annual Report, the Faculty & Staff Handbook, as well as promotional and support materials, for nearly 60 events. We implemented – in conjunction with Regional, District and Mesa partners - enrollment marketing campaigns (in both English and Spanish) for Fall 2022, Spring 2023 and Summer 2023, resulting in meeting and/or exceeding enrollment targets. We produced videos for Strong Workforce programs, Commencement, academic programs, Pathways, the Career Launchpad Guidebook and athletics. We also supported enrollment and participation in specific programs and events such as Allied Health applications, the Promise Program, CRUISE and JumpStart. Despite a 4 month vacancy in the Digital Communications Specialist position, and with the assistance of categorical funding and a consultant, we were still able to increase our social media engagement and reach by nearly 10%. We arranged and conducted multiple successful media events for fundraisers, art exhibitions, athletics, grand openings, and events including elected officials. We have shared, written and posted nearly one hundred stories highlighting campus, student, faculty and staff successes. We have participated in committees for scholarship, commencement, pathways, canyon classroom, enrollment management, program review, PCAB, information technology, strong workforce, advancement, DEI, LatinX Alliance, AANAPISI, BSU, professional development, Mesa2023, regional marketing, district marketing and outreach, and have served as liaisons for a variety of community groups. We have contributed to and promoted multiple college-wide initiatives including equity, pathways, and basic needs.

Mesa College 60th Anniversary Planning and Implementation:

In early 2023, the Office of Communications began planning for the Mesa College 60th Anniversary in 2024. We served as members of the 60th Anniversary committee to help create and plan for the College's milestone year. All staff members - both full-time and part-time - assisted with this effort. We began by creating the logo, branding and slogan for the 60th Anniversary. We conducted ten months of research - reviewing thousands of photos,

Summary and Reflection

hundreds of documents and over 50 hours of archival video footage. We collected information from our own office archives as well as the Mesa College LRC, the District office, the San Diego Public Library, the City Clerks office, the Mesa College Foundation, the World Arts Collection, and news stations CBS8 and KPBS. We were able to use the photos and the footage to create banners and promotional graphics, as well as nearly 30 historical photo albums, allowing us to share over 500 photos in the Mesa College Flickr album with the campus community. We created a 60th Anniversary commemorative video, and a 60th Anniversary Playlist on YouTube, showing casing nearly a dozen archival videos. We designed and created a 60th Anniversary webpage (www.sdmesa.edu/60thAnniversary), which showcases and houses links to all the assets, including a calendar of events. We ordered shirts, lapel pins and buttons. We conducting months of publicity, reaching out to alumni, elected officials, the campus, students and the public in anticipation of the event kick-off, which we successfully planned and held in January 2024. Into 2024, we are continuing to directly manage and support Alumni engagement efforts as well as multiple signature events, including the culminating Fundraising Gala, schedule for October 2024.

Challenges:

Staffing:

Currently, digital engagement is increasing. Website and media traffic has increased by over 35%. As engagement, traffic and users increase, workload, production needs and marketing maintenance increases. This creates a cycle where we do not have the capacity to improve our efforts or keep pace with demand. For example, in the past year, the Office has provided support for over 200 events – both on and off campus (in-person and on-line). As the number of campus events continues to rise, so does the need for event support. Communications staff has provided logistical support, materials creation, web page updates and event photography as well as promotional support (public relations and social media promotions) for the majority of events both on and off campus. Currently the office is limited in its ability to respond and serve campus needs. We are frequently reactive, with very little opportunity to be pro-active. In the next 3-5 years, we anticipate increases in social media usage, and with the implementation of new technology and webpages, the need to train more faculty and staff on communications methods. Additional staff would allow for increased workflow to fulfill multiple requests made for services which would increase productivity, and provide much-needed additional support in the areas of content creation for promotions and priority initiatives. Otherwise, the Office of Communications would continue to function as is, with a reduced capacity to fully fulfill the needs of the campus community.

Budget:

Our Office is currently funded at \$25,000 per year. This is less than \$1.00 per student per year. According to a 2019 SimpsonScarborough survey, 4-year educational institutions frequently spend between \$429 and \$623 per enrolled student, per year, on marketing. As a result of the pandemic, and the changing digital landscape, new and more frequent methods of marketing and communications are needed to reach both younger (HS pipeline) and older (return to college) prospective students. Generation Z has been dubbed as “digital natives” and they do not engage in the same way or display the same psycho-graphics and behaviors as generations before them. New modes and methods – and more frequent – marketing and promotions are needed. In the past year, the Office of Communications has been able to take advantage of categorical funding for advertising, and we have seen increased correlation with our KPIs to include engagement, attendance at events and enrollment. This demonstrates that our office needs an updated, appropriate and increased budget (at least \$5-10 per student per year) that will allow us to increase marketing and promotions in the broader community and to a greater variety of stakeholders across multiple demographics, regarding Mesa courses, programs and services. We feel that it is imperative to keep an active and engaged pipeline of interested incoming students, and to increase and impact enrollment trends.

If applicable, describe any major curricular or service changes your unit has engaged in and the impact of those changes since the last comprehensive review.

With growing demand to implement and promote new programs and services, the office is still challenged with serving our campus clients and protecting the campus brand. We are working to streamline and improve how we do business, and trying to find solutions when there are capacity and bandwidth issues.

Summary and Reflection

If applicable, describe the impact of any new resources (human, fiscal, etc) on the unit and/or action plan implementation.

In the past year, the Office of Communications has been able to take advantage of categorical funding from Pathways, Strong Workforce, HEERF and the Block Grant. This has increased our ability to hire part-time staff and consultants to support our work in the areas of web development/design, social media, event support, news, photography and marketing. It has also allowed us to place paid advertising across multiple channels such as television, radio, digital streaming platforms, social media and web. Preliminary analytics on enrollment trends confirm that this additional infusion of resources (PT staff, consultants and budget) has correlated directly with increased the effectiveness, reach and therefore success of our efforts in the areas of engagement and enrollment.

If you assess OUTCOMES, please confirm that the outcomes have been reviewed for accuracy. If you do not assess Outcomes, skip this question.

Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

Executive Summary Complete

Yes

Data Reflection

Trends observed in program/service area's data.

In the past year, the Office of Communications has:

Received over 700 work requests, from over 200 unique clients.

- This is a 14% increase since last year, and a 17% increase since 2021, and more than twice the amount of requests we were receiving just 5 years ago.
- This is an average of 63 request each month.
- During every month, there were over 100 requests in the queue each month.
- During 5 of those months, there were over 200 project requests in our queue at one time, with 3 month having over 250 request at once
- Over 500 of the 700 requests included more than one element, such as design, photography, social media and/or PR requested at one time.
- Project Request completion can take anywhere from 1 - 60+ days, depending on the project components, availability of assets, prioritization, and requested/required due dates.

Office of Communications engagement impacts:

- Website: Over 7 million total pages views, and 35% increase in the past 2 years
- Photos: Added over 50 albums and over 15,0000 photos to Flickr (62,000 photos and counting)
- News: Issued over 65 news stories, media advisories and articles, and been mentioned over 250 times in local, regional and national news and trade publications.
- Social Media: Over 53,000 followers across all platforms
- Radio and streaming (local radio and Pandora): Over 2,600,000 impressions to promote Spring/Summer 2023 enrollment
- Video: Streaming and cable: Over 115,000 Impressions to promote Spring/Summer 2023 enrollment.

Committee work: Office staff have/are participating in nearly 20 committees, task-forces and work-groups across campus, the district and the region.

Summary and Reflection

Describe any equity gaps in the data. Are there differences and/or patterns observed by demographics (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, age, etc.)

Although the Office of Communications does not/cannot collect demographics in our advertising analytics (GA), we remain committed to providing equity in all of work, and creating content that reaches multiple and diverse audiences, and is culturally responsive. We work actively with academic and student support services (such as Ethnic Studies, HSI, AANAPISI and LGBTQ+) to promote programs and services designed to close any equity gaps revealed in the data. For example, upon reviewing the Equity Analysis for Scholarships with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Affairs, we immediately adjusted the way that we promote and advertise scholarship opportunities, which resulted in the closure of multiple equity gaps. Prominent support and publicity for our Dreamers, FAST, BSU, and Pride Center, along with Basic Needs and other equity initiatives, has allowed more students to become aware, and take advantage of those services, and feel included and supported.

Describe the discussion(s) that took place about the unit's learning outcomes assessment data.

The Office of Communications has been actively engaged with the Regional and District efforts to gather new data on students' needs since the pandemic. We have reviewed our own office goals, in order to crosswalk them with the goals in Mesa2023. We have also conducted analysis of recent enrollment trends, as well as marketing strategies and tactics that may be more effective than those used previously. These are ongoing discussions in our unit, as we believe in pursuing the best course that can reach and assist students.

Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

Data Reflection Complete

Yes

Practice Reflection

Describe current practices your program/service area has engaged in that you believe impact the above data trends and equity gaps.

In addition to supporting campus equity initiatives as stated above, Internally, we review and analyze our own processes and methods to achieve equity, such as having information available online and via digital means which has shown success in removing many barriers for our students. Our goal is to continue to provide strategies and implement tactics using online and social media platforms, as well as traditional methods that best fit the needs of our students. Ultimately, the ability to provide more information and resources will be reflected in our ability to be more equitable and serve more students - particularly those that have been traditionally underserved. Providing digital assets and universal access helps removes economic barriers for students – and makes accessing materials and information easier and more streamlined. Students at Mesa have utilized on-line textbook resources and collectively saved millions of dollars. We have seen a similar trend in website access and usage; students are accessing the Mesa College website to get the information they need when they need it – and from wherever they are.

What other factors (internal or external) might also impact the above data trends and equity gaps?

Both internal and external factors will impact trends and our ability to close equity gaps, including legislation, new and emerging technology, programs offered by competitors, staffing and budget (see above), and increased requests to support new District and college-wide initiatives, activities of the Mesa Foundation and new grants.

Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

Practice Reflection Complete

Yes

Summary and Reflection

Mid-Cycle Updates

Are there any edits or updates to the Executive Summary above?

Are there any edits or updates to the Data Reflection above?

Are there any edits or updates to the Practice Reflection above?

Summary and Reflection

Increase Awareness of Mesa College

Unit Goal: Conduct a variety of communications, marketing, advertising and promotions to increase awareness of Mesa College.

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2025 - 2026

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

- Completion - Objective 3: X
- Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 1: X
- Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 3: X

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p>Action Plan Status: Active</p> <p>Action Plan: Goal 1: Conduct a variety of communications, marketing, and promotions to increase awareness of Mesa College and close equity gaps.</p> <p>Actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote course offerings, initiatives, events, activities, programs, and services to drive enrollment 2. Work with departments and offices to analyze equity trends and provide focus in needed academic and student support areas 3. Promote accomplishments and manage community engagement <p>Action Plan Cycle: 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026</p>	

Meet Communication Needs

Unit Goal: Fulfill the communications needs of campus clients and the District in a timely manner.

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2025 - 2026

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

Summary and Reflection

- Community - Objective 2: X
- Completion - Objective 1: X
- Completion - Objective 4: X

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p>Action Plan Status: Active</p> <p>Action Plan: Goal 2: Fulfill the communications needs of campus clients, the District and the region.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide support with graphic design, photography, event planning/execution, multimedia (web and social media). 2. Serve on committees and liaise with colleagues 3. Issue news releases and stories to support Mesa, District and regional public relations/media. <p>Action Plan Cycle: 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026</p>	

Communications Subject Matter Experts

Unit Goal: Serve as communications subject matter experts for campus clients.

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

- Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 1: X
- Scholarship - Objective 2: X

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p>Action Plan Status: Active</p>	

Summary and Reflection

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p>Action Plan: Goal 3: Serve as communications subject matter experts for campus clients.</p> <p>Actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide training and guidance to increase administrators, faculty and classified professionals knowledge of marketing and communications best practices. 2. Monitor current trends and strategies (via Professional development, research, conferences, etc.) to maximize the success of college promotional efforts <p>Action Plan Cycle: 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026</p>	

New, Effective and Efficient Methods of Communication.

Unit Goal: Implement (where feasible) new, effective and efficient methods of communication.

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2025 - 2026

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

- Community - Objective 1: X
- Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 5: X
- Stewardship - Objective 2: X

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p>Action Plan Status: Active</p> <p>Action Plan: Goal 4: Implement (where feasible) new, effective and efficient methods of communication.</p> <p>Actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building and leveraging digital infrastructure for both internal and processes via the website. 2. Research, recommend and implement updated/emerging social media, digital promotions and web applications. 	

Summary and Reflection

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
Action Plan Cycle: 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026	